

61-8685

PRC Project file

**Project Review Committee  
Record of Action**

**SUBJECT: DD/I Mechanical Translation Project**

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**REFERENCE: PRC Meeting, 5 October 1961  
Subject as Above**

1. This memorandum has been prepared pursuant to action taken in referenced meeting.

**2. Background**

a. The Mechanical Translation Project has been continuously operative since initially approved in June of 1956.

b. Referenced meeting was convened at the request of the Deputy Director (Intelligence) in order for the PRC to:

- (1) Review the current status of the project.
- (2) Discuss certain issues upon which there appeared to be a divergence of opinion between the project and the Agency Advisory Committee on Linguistics.
- (3) Determine the level of financial support to be provided by CIA during FY 1962.
- (4) Provide the project with guidance on the priorities to prevail during FY 1962.

**3. Discussion**

a. During the course of referenced meeting, the project director provided the Committee with an extensive review of the history of the project, up through its current state of development.

b. Considerable attention was devoted to a "production assessment" which had been made by the Agency Advisory Committee

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on Linguistics. In this connection, it was noted that this is not a committee of translators but one of end-users who are primarily concerned with the availability and quality of the machine-produced product, in terms of their ability to use it now. It was the considered opinion of this advisory group that, at this point:

(1) The product is not acceptable, as of production quality, directly out of the machine.

(2) The cost and time required to "post-edit" the current product are far from acceptable, from a purely business basis.

c. It was the position of the project director that:

(1) This "assessment" had been premature.

(2) More favorable results would have come out of this test if the project personnel had been permitted to participate and alert the translators to certain peculiarities and deficiencies of the current product.

(3) Additional research and test-for-proof are indicated.

(4) Guidance is desirable on the criteria to be employed to establish an acceptable "production-target".

d. It appeared that:

(1) There is no serious disagreement between the project director and the Agency Advisory Committee on Linguistics.

(2) An adjustment of priorities and criteria for the coming year will emphasize research to improve the system, aiming at a point which is yet to be established. For purposes of the moment, this point is to be considered as a time factor (to post-edit) of one-quarter the time required for human translation and with a related cost not to exceed one hundred and twenty-five per cent of what human costs are. An acceptable test-for-proof would be in the neighborhood of fifteen thousand words.

(3) The previously planned production run of ten million words is to be indefinitely deferred until more acceptable results can be attained through additional research and tests-for-proof.

(4) Further analysis and evaluation of the quality of the machine product on tests-for-proof is to be considered the business of the project, de-emphasizing volume and "production-for-use" in favor of "production-for-proof".

c. On the subject of evaluation:

(1) An evaluation should come at each stage of testing, coincident with the management of the project. This responsibility lies with the project director and the project case officer.

(2) The degree of communication between the project and Agency elements destined to work with the ultimate product should be expanded so that Agency personnel:

a/. May "grow up" with the system.

b/. Contribute effectively to the next PRC review and evaluation, to be scheduled during the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 1962.

4. Conclusions

a. There is no point in holding the PRC review (referenced meeting) to an immediate short-term evaluation.

b. Additional Agency financial support should be provided to the project, up to the programmed amount of \$200,000 FY 1962 (minus to be released in quarterly increments, at the discretion of the Deputy Director (Intelligence) or his designee. STATINTL

5. Action

a. The members of the Committee were in agreement in approval of the project for FY 1962 in the programmed amount of \$200,000 within the existent authority of the approved operating budget of the DB/L. STATINTL

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b. [REDACTED] were specifically directed to appear before the PRC some time during the last quarter of FY 1961 for the purpose of demonstrating to the Committee that there had been reasonable and appropriate progress, in consonance with the substance of the review outlined above.

c. The Secretary, PRC, was directed to prepare a Record of Action, with the understanding that no further authorization is required for the DD/I and the Comptroller to take appropriate action to support the project, as outlined in this memorandum.

[REDACTED]  
Secretary  
Project Review Committee

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CONCUR

(signed) Lyman Kirkpatrick

Inspector General  
Chairman

(signed) Robert Amory, Jr. \*

Deputy Director (Intelligence)

(signed) H. Gates Lloyd

3 Nov 61

Assistant Deputy Director (Support)

(signed) Richard M. Bissell, Jr. 13 Nov 1961

Deputy Director (Plans)

C  
O  
P  
Y

27 October 1961

**DD/I Comment:**

\* Paragraph 3 b should be amended to indicate that the Committee was made up of representatives of the major components of the Agency who consulted with end-users in evaluating the machine produced product.

Paragraph 4 b should be amended to indicate that the amount of [REDACTED] the carry-over of unused 1961 project funds.

STATINTL